

MIDDLETOWN

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUREAU OF FIRE PREVENTION

Theron C. Adkins, Fire Inspector
16 James Street
Middletown, New York 10940
(845) 346-4111
Fax: (845) 343-4014
Cell: (845) 741-6116
E-Mail tadkins@middletown-ny.com

FIRE PREVENTION CHECKLIST

This publication serves as a guideline for owners, managers, and operators of all occupancies to identify and correct potential fire code violations and life safety hazards through self-inspection.

Please use this checklist to maintain your business and regularly re-visit these commonly found fire prevention violations so you are able to continue to provide the highest level of fire safety for both your employees and the general public.

If you have any specific questions or identify an item which is not detailed within our checklist or wish to obtain more detailed information, please feel free to contact our office and we would be happy to provide you with additional fire safety education or guidance to clarify or remedy a potential unsafe condition.

OVERVIEW

A mercantile occupancy is typically a building or structure open to the public displaying and selling goods or merchandise. Because mercantile occupancies normally involve the display and sale of large quantities of combustible goods, the potential fire hazard in these occupancies can be relatively significant.

A place of public assembly is typically a building or structure open to the public where the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof, for the gathering together of persons for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions, recreation, food or drink consumption or awaiting transportation. The potential fire hazard in these occupancies can be significant.

A business occupancy is typically a building or structure open to the public where the use of a building or structure, or a portion thereof includes, among others, for office professional or service-type transactions, including storage of records and accounts. The potential fire hazard in these occupancies is usually less significant with limited storage of products or goods and occupants have a better awareness of the surroundings due to the daily use of the building or space.

All of these occupancies are typically frequented by large numbers of people unfamiliar with the building features, location of emergency exits, and the potential hazards present, further increasing the risk to building occupants from the hazards of fire.

EMERGENCY EXITS (Means of Egress)

1. Are all designated exit doors unlocked and available for immediate use?
2. Do all exit doors fully open without the use of a key, tool, or special knowledge/effort? Inside
3. Are all exit discharge doors free of obstructions or obstacles on the exterior that would prevent the exit door from completely opening and allowing free passage to safety?
4. Are all exit discharge doors leading to the building exterior adequately illuminated with lights?
5. Are all aisles, corridors, passageways and stairs leading to exit doors clear of obstructions or impediments, and free of tripping hazards?
6. Are all exit stairways and corridors free of combustible storage and hazardous materials?
7. Are all "EXIT" signs not obstructed, clearly visible, readable, and illuminated?
8. Is all emergency lighting properly working and periodically (monthly) inspected and tested?
9. Where provided, is approved panic or fire exit hardware installed on latching exit doors?

CROWD MANAGEMENT

1. During business hours, are persons inside the building limited to a safe/manageable number?
2. During peak occupancy, are exit passageways, exit aisles and exit doorways at all times free of obstructions including displays, merchandise, fixtures, patrons or staff?
3. Are all employees, staff and attendants trained and drilled in the duties to be performed in case of fire, panic or other emergency?
4. If you are a place of public assembly, is your occupancy limit sign posted near the main exit or exit access doorway from the room or space?

FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

1. Are all fire protection systems maintained in an operative condition at all times?
2. Fire alarms require an annual inspection, testing and maintenance. Has your fire alarm systems been periodically inspected and tested?
3. Sprinkler systems require a quarterly inspection, testing and maintenance. Has your fire sprinkler systems been periodically inspected and tested?
4. Are all sprinkler heads not painted, and free of dust, debris or foreign matter?
5. Kitchen hood fire suppression systems require inspection, testing and maintenance every six months. Have all Kitchen hood fire suppression systems (if provided) been inspected and tested every six months?
6. Where provided, is the fire suppression coverage required for cooking appliances located under each commercial kitchen exhaust hood system correct and adequately maintained?
7. Does each fire protection system have a current inspection/service tag attached?
8. Is a clear and unobstructed path provided to all fire protection systems and equipment including access doors, control panels, sprinkler system control valves and pull stations?
9. Prior to conducting a fire drill, has the fire department and/or monitoring company been notified?
10. During any construction has all the preventive measures been taken to reduce nuisance or false alarms?
 - ◇ Temporarily bagging of smoke detectors
 - ◇ Take fire protection system temporarily offline with monitoring company

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

1. Is a portable fire extinguisher located within 75 feet of any portion of the occupancy and within 30 feet of a commercial cooking line?
2. Is each portable fire extinguisher fully charged, mounted 3 to 5 feet above the floor, visible and readily accessible for use?
3. Is each portable fire extinguisher visually inspected every month and serviced annually?
4. Does each portable fire extinguisher have a current annual service tag attached?

FIRE DOORS, FLOORS, WALLS & CEILINGS

1. Are all swinging fire doors maintained without door stops, wedges or any unapproved hold-open devices?
2. Do all swinging fire doors self-close from any open position and positively latch when closed? (latching does not mean locking and means when latched, the door will not open by itself)
3. Is fire-resistive rated construction, such as fire-rated dry wall, masonry and concrete floors, walls and ceilings free of holes or penetrations that spread smoke or fire?
4. Are suspended ceiling tile properly installed and in good condition?

STORAGE & HOUSEKEEPING

1. Are equipment rooms such as mechanical, electrical and boiler rooms accessible and free of combustible or hazardous storage?
2. Is the area around furnaces, boilers and water heaters free of combustible storage and accessible at all times?
3. Is all inside storage orderly and not located within 2 feet of the ceiling or within 18 inches below or near any sprinkler head?
4. Is the top of all inside storage maintained to a maximum height of 12 feet?
5. Is trash, rubbish and other combustible waste not stored in a manner that would create a fire hazard or nuisance to the occupants?
6. Are all compressed gas cylinders secured to prevent falling?
7. Is fueled equipment, such as gasoline-fueled power washers or portable cooking appliances located outside of the building?
8. Are portable propane cylinders located outside of the building, stored in a safe location away from exit doors, ignition sources and secured to prevent tampering with the valves or theft?
9. Are combustible materials not stored or displayed under non-sprinklered eaves, canopies or other structural projections of buildings protected with an automatic sprinkler system?
10. Where provided and approved, are high-piled or high-rack storage arrangements (storage greater than 12 feet in height) maintained as originally approved and in accordance with Chapter 23 of the Fire Prevention Code ?
11. Is the quantity of hazardous materials located inside the building and on the premises limited to the maximum allowable quantity permitted?

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

1. Are extension cords utilized only in temporary applications
2. Where utilized, are extension cords of the heavy-duty type free of physical damage and unplugged when not in use?
3. Are multi-plug adapters and power-strips UL listed and equipped with over current protection (a circuit breaker)?
4. Are all electrical panels, junction boxes, outlets and switches protected with approved cover plates?
5. Are electric motors free of accumulations of oil, waste or debris?
6. Is a minimum of 36 inches of clearance maintained from all electrical service equipment, breaker panels and transformers?
7. Is illumination provided in dedicated electrical rooms and in rooms equipped with electrical control equipment and panels?

HEATING, VENTILATION & COOKING

1. Are permanently installed fuel-fired heating appliances such as furnaces, boilers or water heaters properly maintained and correctly vented to the outside of the building?
2. Are portable electric space heaters located a minimum of 10 feet from combustible material and plugged directly into a wall outlet?
3. Is each portable electric space heater UL listed, equipped with a tip-over automatic shut-off switch and unplugged at the close of business and/or when not in use?
4. Is all mechanical and ventilating equipment free of accumulations of dust and waste material?
5. Are all cooking operations that produce heat, steam, smoke or grease-laden vapor located under an approved commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct system?
6. Where provided, is each commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct systems accumulations of grease and residue periodically cleaned to bare metal?
7. Are suitable noncombustible ash trays or receptacles available in designated smoking areas?
8. Are lighted matches, cigarettes, cigars, ashes or embers discarded in a safe manner so as not to cause a fire?

EMERGENCY PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS

1. If required, is a copy of the Fire Inspector approved Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan for your occupancy available in the workplace for reference and review by employees and inspection by the Fire Inspector?
2. Are records for required employee fire extinguisher and emergency response training kept on premises available for inspection?
3. Are records for required employee training in the contents of fire safety and evacuation plans and their duties maintained as part of new employee orientation and at least annually thereafter? Records shall be kept and made available to the code enforcement official upon request.

BUILDING & EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS

1. Is the 4" minimum building address posted and clearly visible from the street?
2. Does the fire department rapid entry key box ("Knox Box") have the correct keys inside so the fire department can gain entry into the building in the event of an emergency after hours?
 - ◆ This is a new rapid access program to reduce building damage where building access is needed at non-emergency incident –
3. Are all fire hydrants readily accessible and not blocked including snow removal and snow storage?
4. Are all designated fire lanes and vehicle entrances to the premises maintained clear of obstructions including storage, merchandise, and vehicles?
5. Where provided, are outside fire department sprinkler connections visible and accessible?

PERMITS & DOCUMENTATION

1. Is a valid occupancy or general business permit posted in a conspicuous location available for inspection?
2. Are Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for hazardous materials readily available on site?
3. Are records of inspections, tests, and maintenance of all fire protection systems and emergency lighting systems kept on premises available for inspection?
4. If applicable, is a cleaning schedule for all commercial kitchen exhaust hood and duct systems posted on each hood?